

SITE 653 UPDATE

Plans for a student center on Site 653, the City-owned land located on the corner of La Jolla Village Drive, La Jolla Scenic Drive North and La Jolla Scenic Way, have been stopped. A Superior Court judge ruled that the City of San Diego must conduct an environmental impact report before plans can proceed. As a result of the court's ruling, all San Diego City Council resolutions and permits related to the project have been rescinded. The ruling is not yet final because there are additional motions that need to be considered by the court.

Also at issue is whether the city overstepped legal bounds in opting to sell instead of leasing the site to Hillel of San Diego. That matter, to be heard later in a "taxpayer waste" trial, involves whether or not the price the city received for Site 653 was well below fair-market value and if the highest and best use of the site was considered.

In May 2006, the City Council, led by Council President Scott Peters, voted 6-2 in favor of selling Site 653 to Hillel to construct a 12,000 square foot student center with a minimum 17,000 square foot garage. Peters attached 25 conditions to the sale. One of the conditions was that the City is indemnified in any lawsuit.

In June 2006, the **La Jolla Shores Association** and Taxpayers For Responsible Land Use, a California, nonprofit public benefit corporation, brought suit against the City, alleging that the City did not adequately assess traffic, parking, and environmental impacts.

All La Jolla community groups opposed the construction of the student center at this location. Reasons cited included increased traffic, noise, pollution, parking and safety hazards, which would directly impact the single-family residential community's livability. Other reasons are that the site should have remained as an open-space buffer between the single-family neighborhood and the UCSD campus, and that construction of an institutional center on the site would set an undesirable precedent.

VIA CAPRI TRAFFIC CALMING

Over 75 Via Capri residents are finally seeing results of their two-year effort to seek solutions to the high number of accidents and speeding along Via Capri. The City of San Diego has approved the installation of a landscaped traffic island at Via Capri and Hidden Valley Road and a landscaped traffic circle at Via Capri and Senn Way; Council President Peters has assured residents that funding is available for construction. However, because the City refuses to maintain the landscaping, the **La Jolla Shores Association** has undertaken the responsibility of devising a method by which the island and the circle can be maintained. Details for a Streetscape Maintenance Agreement will be worked out with the City Attorney's office. In the meantime, temporary stop signs have been approved and should be installed at the intersection of Via Capri and Senn Way to improve road safety for residents, motorists and pedestrians.

AVENIDA DE LA PLAYA IMPROVEMENTS

Tired of trying to fight your way up or down Avenida de la Playa? Improvements are on the way! Working with the La Jolla Community Parking District Advisory Board, the **La Jolla Shores Association** recently took the following steps to reduce commercial congestion:

- New signage and enforcement 7 days a week from 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM
- All 1- and 2-hour parking zones changed to 90 minutes
- New 90-minute parking on several streets, adding about 50 spaces
- Improvement of green zones by additions or changes

CHABAD CENTER SHORES PROPOSAL

The **La Jolla Shores Association** held a February special meeting to consider the proposed Chabad Center project, which would demolish an existing one-story home and create an 11,666 square-foot structure on top of a 10,000 square-foot underground parking garage at the corner of Hidden Valley and Ardath Roads.

The vast majority of attendees overwhelmingly voted against the project, citing traffic concerns and incompatibility with the single-family residential neighborhood in which it is planned. The project would create a 2,800 square-foot rabbi's residence, a 96-seat synagogue, and a 16-student preschool meant solely for use by La Jollans. **LJSA** voted 7-1 to oppose the project.

The Chabad Center project has applied to the City for a permit and is proceeding through the community review process. For updates, contact the City's project manager, Edith Gutierrez, at egutierrez@sandiego.gov.

VENTER INSTITUTE PLANNED

The University of California, San Diego, is undergoing the approval process for the development of a three-story, 45,000-square-foot research facility on 1.9 acres of UCSD-owned land along Torrey Pines Road near Allen Field. The Venter Institute will provide a research facility for collaborative projects with Scripps Institution of Oceanography, UCSD, and the California Institute for Telecommunication and Information Technology.

Venter will employ 125 people. Surface and underground lots will provide parking for 112 cars; shuttle buses and other carpooling methods will be implemented to mitigate the reduced on-site parking. Vehicle access will be provided from Torrey Pines Road.

UCSD has released a Mitigated Negative Declaration for public comment. Approval from the University of California Regents and the California Coastal Commission are also required. Construction is planned to start in early 2008 with occupancy in late 2009. For more information, contact UCSD's Community Planning Department at (858) 534-5782, or visit www.commplan.ucsd.edu.